

THE Night Before CHRISTMAS



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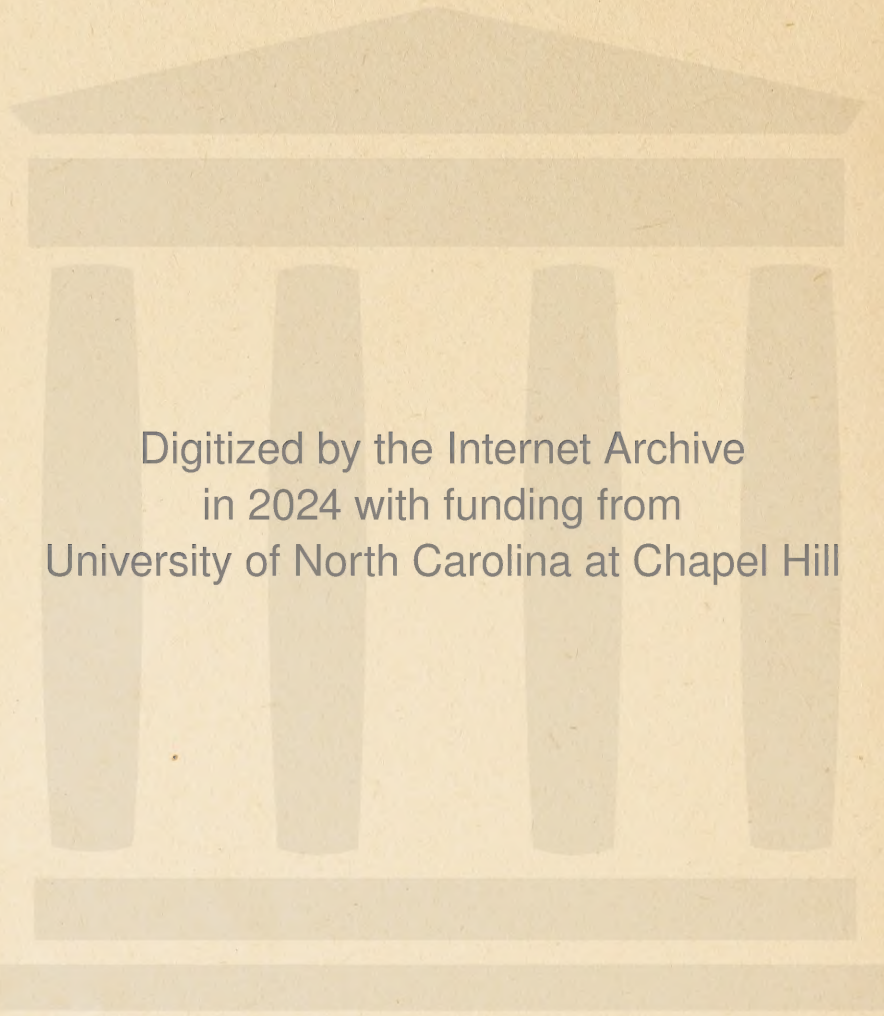
RARE BOOK COLLECTION



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In Memory of Their Son
William Porter Kellam, Jr., Class of 1950
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Mama to Archie.

Christmas 1899.



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DEAR OLD SANTA CLAUS

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

AND OTHER POPULAR STORIES FOR CHILDREN



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PUBLISHERS



The Night Before Christmas.



'T WAS the
night before
Christmas,
and all through
the house,
Not a creature
was stirring,
not even a
mouse.

The stockings
were hung by

the chimney with care,
In the hope that St. Nicholas
soon would be there.

The children were nestled all
snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums
danced in their heads.

And mamma in her kerchief,
and I in my cap,







Had just settled our brains for a long winter's
nap;

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the
matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and
threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of
the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of midday
to objects below—

When what to my won-
dering eyes should appear
But a miniature sleigh and
eight tiny reindeer,





With a little old
driver so lively
and quick,
I knew in a
moment it
must be St.
Nick.

More rapid than
eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted and called them
by name—

“Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer!
Now, Vixen!

On, Comet! On, Cupid! On, Dunder and
Blixen!

To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall!

Now, dash away! Dash
away! Dash away!
All!”

As dry leaves before
the wild hurri-
cane fly,



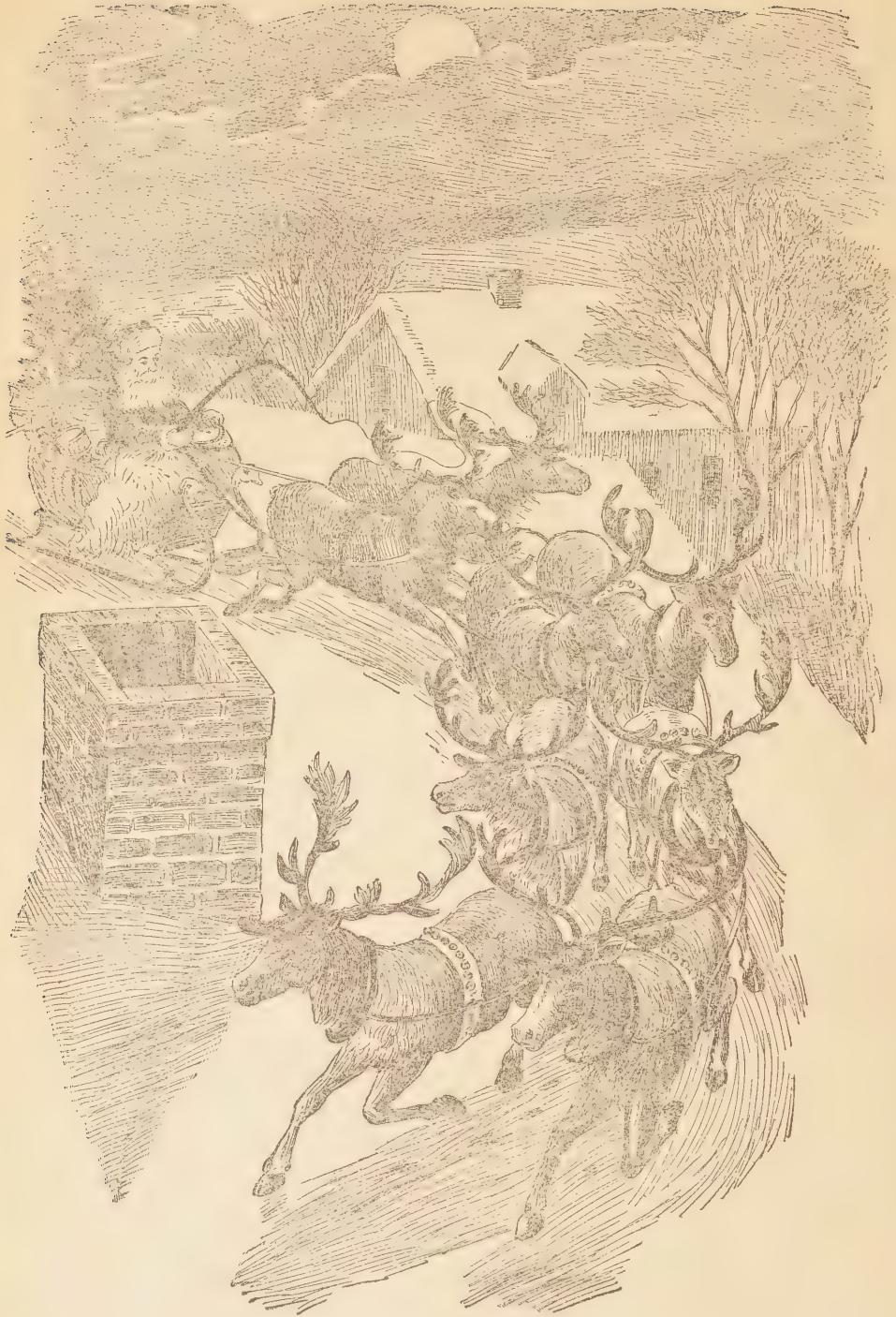
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to
the sky,

So up to the house-top the coursers they flew
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas,
too.

And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each tiny hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning
around,

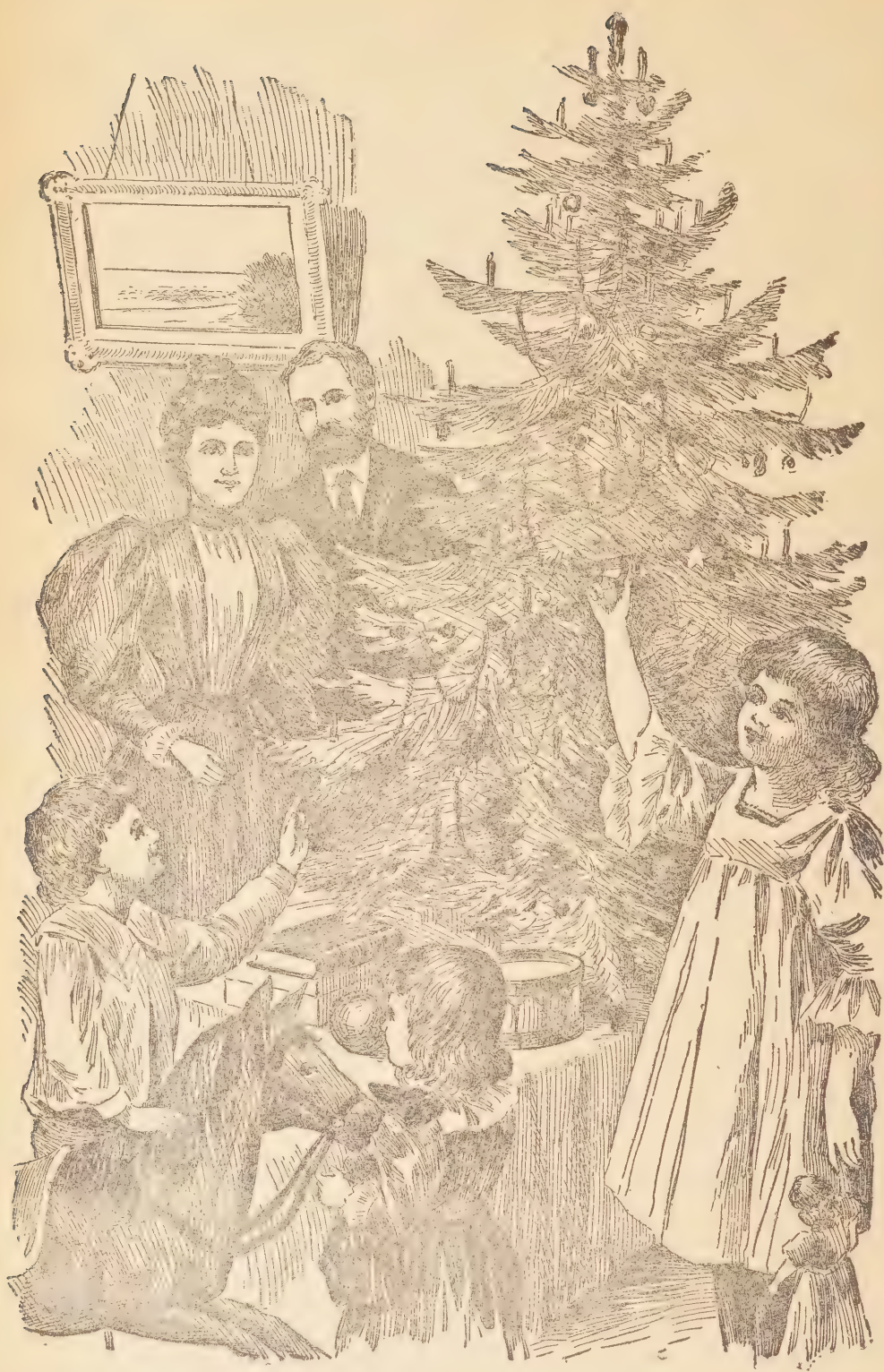
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with
a bound. (



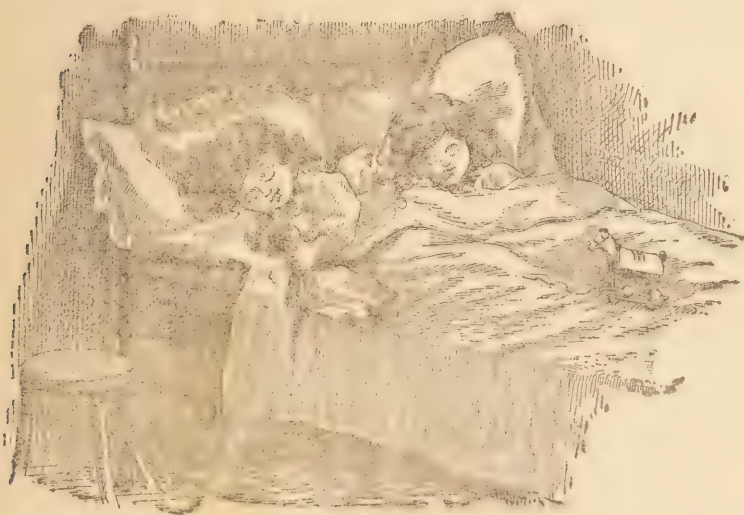


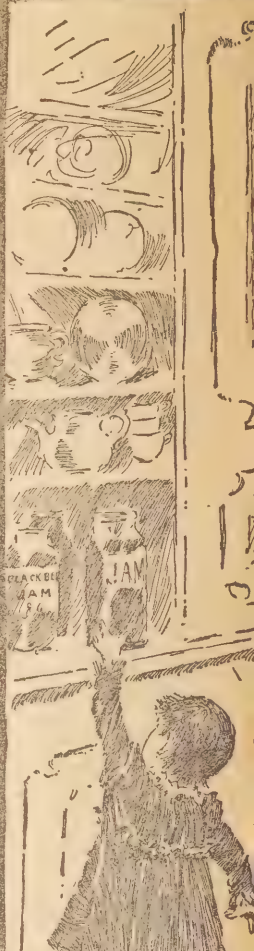
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his
teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a
wreath.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old
elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of
myself.
A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to
dread.





He spoke not a word, but went straight to his
work,
And filled all the stockings—then turned with
a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a
whistle,
And away they all flew, like the down of a
thistle;
But I heard him exclaim ere he drove out of
sight,
“Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-
night!”





The Night After Christmas.

'TWAS the night after Christmas, and all
through the house

Not a creature was stirring—excepting a mouse.
The stockings were flung in haste over the chair,
For hopes of St. Nicholas were no longer there.
The children

were restlessly
tossing in bed,



For the pie and the candy were heavy as lead;
While mamma in her kerchief, and I in my gown,
Had just made up our minds that we would not
lie down,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my chair to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I went with a dash,
Flung open the shutter, and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of noon-day to objects below,



When what to my long anxious eyes should appear
But a horse and a sleigh, both old-fashioned and
queer;

With a little old driver, so solemn and slow,
I knew at a glance it must be Dr. Brough.

I drew in my head, and was turning around,

When upstairs came the
Doctor, with scarcely
a sound.

He wore a thick
overcoat, made
long ago,

And the beard on
his chin was
white with the
snow.

He spoke a few
words, and went
straight to his
work;

He felt all the
pulses,—then
turned with a jerk,



And laying his finger aside of his nose,
With a nod of his head to the chimney he
goes:—

“A spoonful of oil, ma’am, if you have it handy;
No nuts and no raisins, no pies and no candy.
These tender young stomachs cannot well digest
All the sweets that they get; toys and books
are the best.

But I know my advice will not find many
friends,

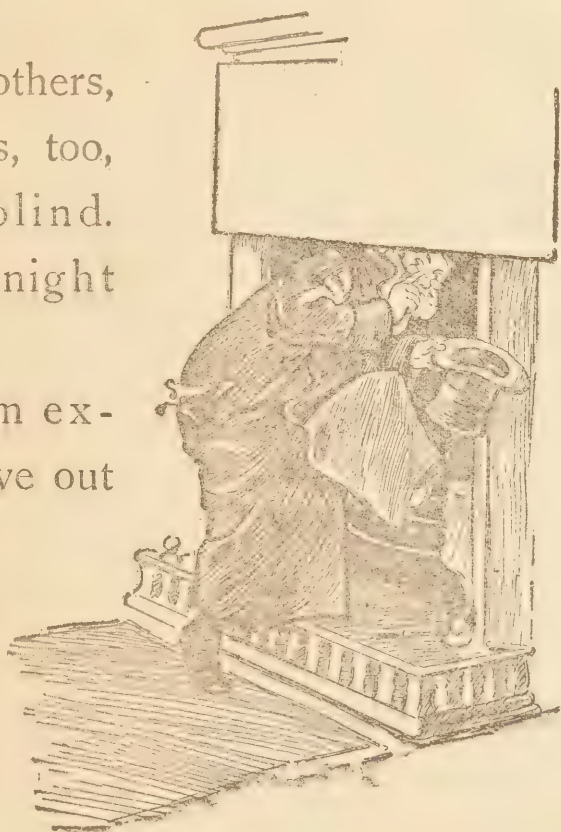
For the custom of Christmas the other way
tends.

The fathers and mothers,
and Santa Claus, too,
Are exceedingly blind.

Well, a good-night
to you!”

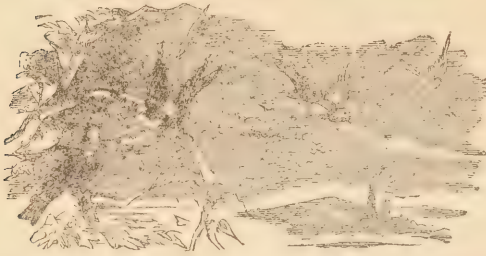
And I heard him ex-
claim, as he drove out
of sight:

“These feastings
and candies
make Doctors’
bills right!”



NELLY'S VISIT

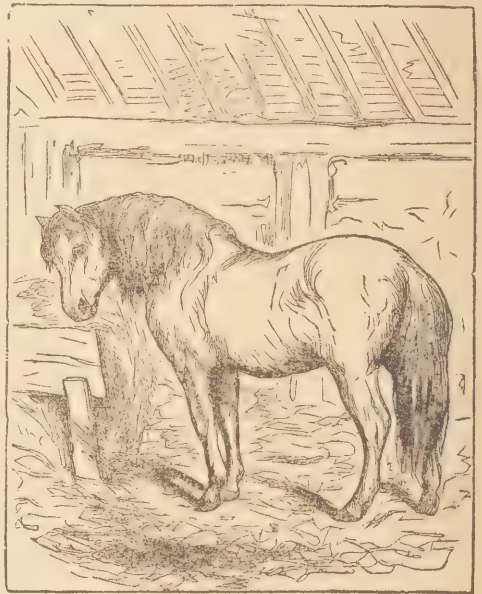
ONE summer, Nelly's auntie, who lived in the country, asked her to come and make a good, long visit, and you may be sure Nelly was very glad to go.



She had always lived in the city, and she thought it great fun to feed the hens and chickens and calves, and to watch all the animals and talk to them.

Cousin Fred was about her own age, so it was very pleasant for them to play together. Fred took her around the farm and told her about all the pets, and they soon knew her as well as though she had always lived there.

Milly, one of the horses, would eat out of a spoon, and Nelly and her cousin took turns feeding



her. When they went away, she whinnied for them to come back again, but Nelly said, "You shall have some more to-morrow; you mustn't be a piggy-wiggy."



One day Fred and Nelly gathered flowers in the woods, and Nelly made a wreath to put upon her cousin's head.

"It seems just like fairyland out here," she said. "Let's play it is fairyland, and I'm a fairy and you're a brownie."

Fred thought that a very good game indeed, and they played that they lived in the flowers and could change themselves into birds, or squirrels, or people, whenever they wished.



But bye and bye they got hungry, and they couldn't live on the honey from the flowers, as real fairies might; so they spread out the lunch which they had brought and decided to be children again. It seemed as though they had never tasted anything quite so good as that lunch.

One day
Speckle, the
big hen,
made a great
fuss because



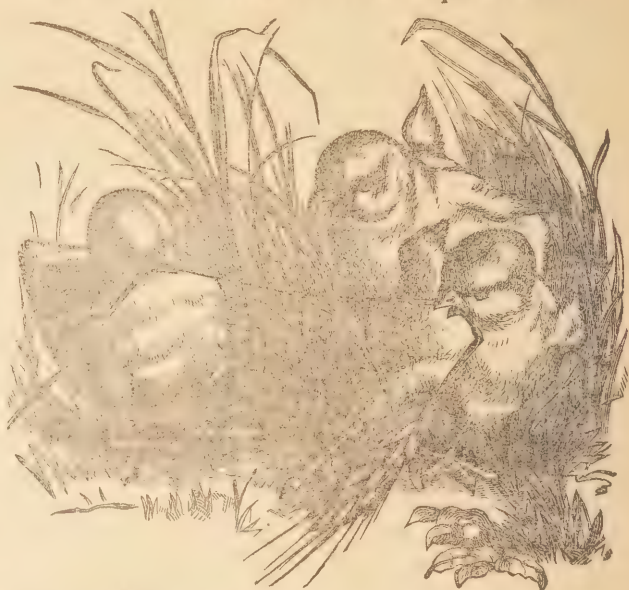
her brood of ducklings went into the water. She flew about here and there on the bank of the stream, and called to them to come back, but the ducklings were having great fun and paid no attention at all to her.



Chanticleer seemed to think they were not very well behaved and needed a good scolding; so he began to strut about and talk at the top of his voice; but the ducklings had their swim and came out as happy as could be.

Nelly thought the little chicks were prettier.

Shep, the dog, could hunt eggs as well as they could, and he always helped them. After he had found a nest, he took each egg carefully in his mouth, and laid it in the basket which the chil-



dren had brought; and he never broke one.

"I believe he could count them if he tried," said Nelly.

"Of course he can count," said Fred. "When we send him after the cows, he never leaves one

behind, nor the sheep either. If one strays away, he hunts for it until he finds it. But he wouldn't hurt one of them for anything, no matter how hard he had to work to bring them in."



They watched the milking, and drank all the warm milk they wanted; and one day they helped churn.

"I believe I could make butter, too," said Nelly.

"Of course you could, dear," said her auntie; "it wouldn't take long for you to learn, either."

Nelly was delighted with this, and wanted to begin right away.



One day when they were out in the pasture, a crow came and perched upon Brindle's head; but she didn't mind it at all. Afterward, the crow got quite tame, and would eat from their hands. They named him Jack.

Fred told his cousin to take Jack home with her, and then she would have something to remind her of the summer's fun.

So they bought a pretty cage, and he seemed very much pleased with it.

"But you can go in and out just as you like," said Nelly.

When it was time to say good-bye, Nelly declared that she had never had such a lovely visit before in all her life.



—*Mary Seymour.*

FAIRY STORIES

L AURA, Eva, and Susy are three sisters who are very fond of fairy stories, as most little girls are. Laura is the oldest, and reads the stories aloud to the others, while Humpty-Dumpty, the kitten, sits near and listens—or, at least, he seems to be listening.



But sometimes he gets tired of sitting still and jumps right up on Laura's book, so she has to stop. Then they all have a great frolic, and very often little brother Harry comes in to join in the fun, and they play until they are tired out.



One story which they like very much is about a little girl who was lost in the woods and wandered about for a long, long time, until she was so



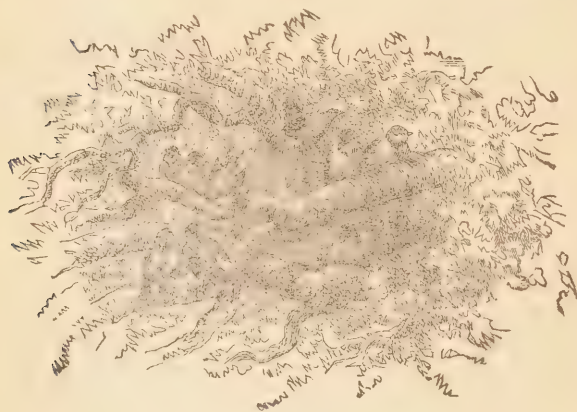
tired that she fell asleep on the ground, with the flowers all around her and the birds singing.

But the birds were really fairies and were watching over her to see that she was not harmed, and they sang to her on purpose to lull her to sleep, for



they knew how tired she was.

And when she awakened, she understood what they said to her and knew they were fairies, and they led her out of



the forest and all the way to her home. They asked her to come and visit them again, too, and promised to take good care of her.



Another of their favorite stories is about the flower fairies who come and dance and sing for little children in the forest when it is very still and the sun is shining brightly.



Laura says she thinks she has almost heard them sometimes, talking to the birds; and they often sit very quiet indeed, with their dollies hugged tightly in their arms, and listen and watch.

Once Eva went to sleep when she was watching like this, out in the grove back of her home, and she dreamed that a fairy came and danced for her and



sang the sweetest songs you ever heard.

"She was just like a little girl, too," said Eva. "She was bare-footed and hadn't any hat on her head, and she wanted me to come and



dance with her."

"Did you?" asked little Susy, breathlessly.

"Of course!" said Eva. "We danced and danced and had just a



lovely time together, and then I had to go and wake up."

"Oh, oh, oh, I wish I could have a dream like





that!" cried little Susy; and she went and lay down on the couch right away, to see if she couldn't go to sleep and dream about fairies, too.

But when she wakened, she said that all she could dream about was just a lot of little frogs sitting up very straight on the bank of a



brook, with a great, big frog on a great, big log talking to them.

"I think that was a lovely dream," said Laura; and then little Susy was happy.

"Now let's read some more stories," said Eva, and perhaps next time we'll see some really-truly fairies.



—Fannie E. Ostrander.

OFF ON THE WHEELS

ONE summer Alma and her brother Philip spent their vacation with their auntie, who lived in a beautiful village, so near the pretty country that they could take a ride out into it on their wheels, at any time they wished.



They both rode very well indeed, and they were always finding pretty little spots along the road-side, where they played camp out; for auntie let them take a lunch if they wanted to, and the air was so fresh and pure that they were hungry almost all the time.



One morning they started off quite early with their wheels and their lunch, and they rode out into the country on a pretty road where they had never been before.

It had great trees along the side and a little river winding along with it, and they saw the cattle and horses in the fields, and the hens and chickens and turkeys and geese along the

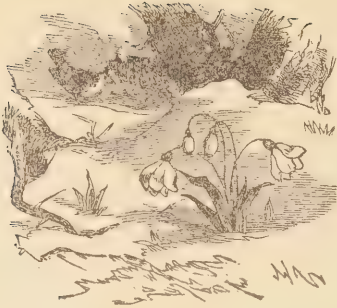


roadside, and once they got off their wheels to talk to a pretty bossy and her calf that were very near the fence.

The bossy was a little afraid they might hurt her baby, so she wasn't quite friendly. But she didn't try to drive them away.

At one side of a farmhouse near, a big dog was lying in his kennel, and a great black cat came up to him very slyly





and tapped him on the nose with one paw. It was funny to see the dog jump up.

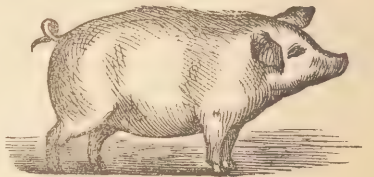
The birds sang, and the hens and chickens talked to each other, and once or twice they stopped to let a flock of geese cross the road in front of them.

Then they came upon a big flock of turkeys, and the gobbler put on airs and pretended he was going to stop them; but they flew past and laughed at him.



By the side of the road in one place, a big, fat, clean-looking pig was standing, sunning himself; but when he saw them, he ran away, squealing.

"You needn't run from us," Philip called after him; "we don't want any pork to-day—we've got chicken for our lunch."



"Yes," said Alma, "and nice, fresh strawberries, and everything good."

They saw a big dog lying near a chicken-coop, with the chickens running over him just as they pleased, and Philip called out again,

“Be careful, you little fellows, or you might happen to run down his throat.”



They got off their wheels and walked for a little while just for



fun; and all at once, as they were passing a barn, Alma cried, “Look! Did you see that cat after the mouse?”

Philip said he didn’t; but pretty soon Mrs. Pussy came out.



“You didn’t get it, did you?” said Alma. “Well, you’re fat enough now; you don’t need to catch mice.”

They stopped to eat their lunch under a clump of trees not very far from a pleasant farm-house. There was a cunning little fat dog lying in front of the house, and as they watched him, up came a bee and lit on his nose.

The little doggy jumped up and barked at the bee; then he sat down and put up his nose in a friendly way, to see what it was.



"Look out, sir!" cried Philip. "You'll get hurt!"

But he spoke just a little too late, for puppy-dog found out his mistake,

and the next minute he was running away and yelping at the top of his voice.

"The poor little thing!" said Alma. "Wasn't that too bad?"

"Yes," said Philip, "but he'll get over it pretty quick, and I

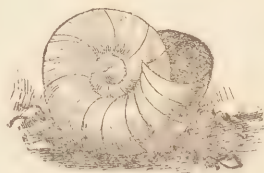


can't help laughing, it did look so funny."



When they went back to their auntie's, they told her that was the best bicycle ride

they had ever had.



—Fannie E. Ostrander.



FIELD FLOWERS.

Sweet Ella and Bobby one day
Went out in the meadows to play.
With wonderful pains they made daisy chains
And romped in the newly mown hay.

There they played till the red sun set,
And the daisies with dew were wet,
Then the small maiden, with sweet flowers laden,
Ran home with her faithful pet.



GOING TO BED.

THE little brown sparrows have long ceased to sing,
They're each fast asleep in his nest;
The chickens are quiet beneath the hen's wing;
The cow-bell has hushed its ding-a-ling, ding—
'Tis time Bertie-boy was at rest.

CUNNING MICE.

I'll take off his pretty kilt dress and blue tie,
And put on his wrapper instead;
Then, after his sweet good-night kiss to dear Guy,
And low-spoken prayer to Heaven on high,
I'll cover him nicely in bed.

And all the night long an angel will keep
A loving watch over his rest;
While in through his window the bright stars will
peep,
And dreams soft and pretty around him will creep,
Till morn wakes each bird in its nest.

MOTHER CAREY.

CUNNING MICE.

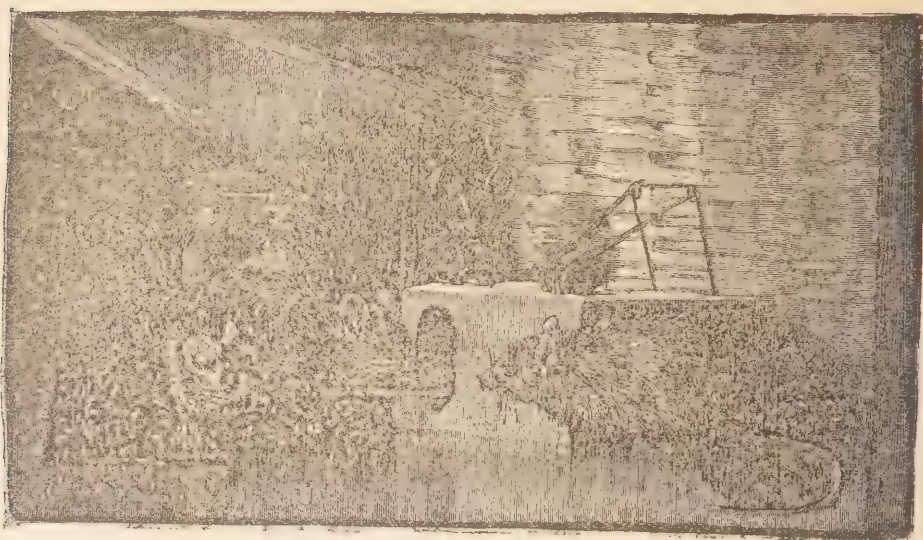
UP in the garret in our house there used to be lots of mice. But they never were any trouble until one day papa put some corn there to dry, so that he could use it to plant in the spring. When he went to look at it, not long after, he found that much of it had been carried off by the mice.

So he told me that he would give me a penny for every mouse I would catch. I was delighted

CUNNING MICE.

and immediately got our old trap, put some cheese in it, and placed it in the garret.

The trap had but two holes, and so could catch but two mice at a time. But I thought that a great many, when for three mornings I had found the trap full, and had been paid six cents for the mice. I thought how rich I should be if I found



two mice in the trap on every morning for a year. But it did not happen so, unfortunately for me.

One morning, when I went to look at my trap, I found it sprung, and the cheese all gone, but there was no mouse. I set the trap again, and the next morning it was the same way,—trap sprung, but no mice and no cheese. I told papa

CUNNING MICE.

about it, and he was so much surprised that he said he would watch for the mice the next night and find out how they did it.

Well, he went up to the garret long after I had gone to sleep. First, he heard a little squeak, then in the bright moonlight he saw a little gray mouse, with large ears and bright eyes, looking out from behind a barrel. Then the little fellow came out, looked around to see that there was no danger, and then gave another little squeak, when three or four more came out, and all went to the trap, peeked into it, and saw that there was more supper for them. But they did not any of them put their heads in to eat it. The largest mouse put his tail into the holes, and, hitting the cheese, sprung the trap; then he pulled out his tail, got the cheese, and shared it with the others.

They all seemed quite happy in thinking how nicely they were cheating that little boy whom they saw so carefully setting the trap to catch them.

CULMER BARNES.



WEE STORIES

Come as quick as you can,

Little maid, little man;



Let us look at these pictures
together.

I will read you the rhymes

About the good times

They show us, in all sorts of
weather.

First Dora we meet,

On her donkey fleet;

His name, she tells me, is Teddy.

She puts on her hat,

And she rides off like that,

For the donkey is kind and steady.

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Now we see her at play

With Clara and May,

Her sisters, so dear and so merry;

And brother boy, Ned,

With his curly head,

And his cheeks as red as a cherry.



Out here in the wood,

Everything tastes so good,

Ned says he will eat all he's able.

The air, it is sweet,

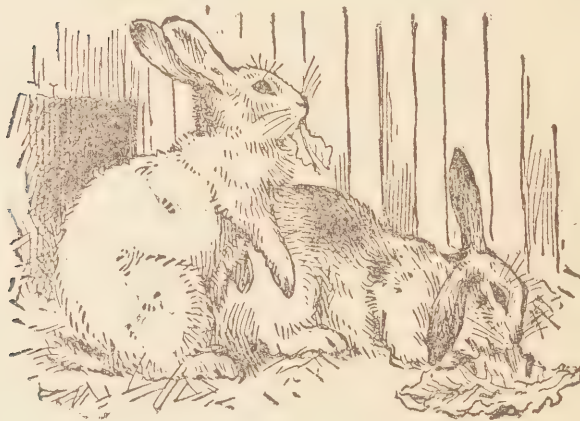
And the grass is so neat,

While the stump makes a very good table.



But in winter, you see,
The children can be
Just as happy, and surely as jolly.
They've a wagon quite stout,
And they like to go out
And gather the Christmas holly.

While with kitty-cats sly
And with rabbits so shy,
They have plenty of pets to amuse them;
And the little things all
Will run at their call,
For the children never abuse them.



And then in the hay

Very often they play;

May likes to be covered up in it.

But Clara says, "No,

We might hurt her so;"

And they take her out in a minute.



Christmas time brings them joys,

With its mirth and its toys,

For Santa is good to remember.

Ned cries with delight,

"I would think it all right

If the whole of the year was December!"



And yet, in the spring,

When he hears the birds sing,

He says that he likes April

better;

And dear little May

Would run out and play

All the time, if they only

would let her.



But mamma says, "Wait;"

And so Cousin Kate

And May, they dress up so funny.

They play with their dolls;

They go and make calls;

And they keep store with buttons

for money.

Last June, Auntie Belle,
Whom the children love well,
Took them all for a day by the water.
They had a long sail;
Played a log was a whale;
And hundreds of flowers they brought her.



Ned waded with Ring,
And taught him to bring
A stick that he sent him out after.
Aunt Belle joined in the sport,
And they all built a fort;
Then they knocked it down with much laughter.

At a cottage so neat,

They had good things to eat—

Oysters, fresh, and clam chowder steaming;

With strawberries red,

Right out of the bed,

And cakes! Why, they thought they were
dreaming.



Then they saw all the stock,

Heard a tame parrot talk

Fed the doves and the bossy-calves clever;

And they rode home at last,

With the sun sinking fast;

But they wished they could stay there
forever.





Next day Clara found

These kits playing around,

And she told Mamma Cat she would feed
them.

Milk and spoons, too, May brought,

For she said that she thought

The baby cats surely would need
them.

Now, of course, Mamma Cat

Was much pleased with that;

But she said that the kits could not
drink it;

So she did what she could,

For she found it quite good,

And she lapped it half up—would you
think it?



To-day Dora, you know,

Has a birthday, and so

These children were asked, as they should be.

I don't know all their names,

But they've played such nice games,

And they've been just as happy as could be.



See them run in a ring,

While they merrily sing—

Dora puts up her fat little finger;

Then she looks to the west

For the one she loves best—

We will throw her a kiss as we linger.

Oh, the summer is sweet,

But the summer is fleet;

We must hunt for the beautiful flowers;

Let us climb all the hills;

Let us laugh with the rills;

Let us rest in the prettiest bowers.

While Clara and Ned,

May, Dora and Ted,

Are as merry as can be together.

With dear Auntie Belle,

And the rest they love well,

They are happy in all sorts of weather.

Fannie E. Ostrander.



DIME AND THE BABY.



DIME AND THE BABY.

Bow-wow! Here I am again! I told you before that my name is Dime; but the baby calls me "Bow-wow." Do you know why? It is because I always say "Bow-wow." It is all the word I know how to say.

Do you know our baby? She has big black eyes, and her mouth looks like a pink rosebud. She is a sweet little girl. I love her dearly. I did not like her when she first came. That was a long time ago. My master was very fond of her. That made me feel cross. I used to bark at baby and show all my teeth. After that they did not let me come near her. I did not see the baby for a long time. I did not care for that.

My master did not seem to like me then. When he saw me, he said, "Go away, Dime! Go away, bad dog! You are not good to

DIME AND THE BABY.

the baby." So I was not happy. I made up my mind to bite that baby.

It was a long time before I got a chance to bite her; but one day I found her alone. She was in her little crib. I put my paws on her crib.

But I did not bite her, after all. Shall I tell you why? She



was too pretty to bite. So I kissed the baby, and I have loved her ever since.

Now, my master likes me again. He pats my head and says, "Good old dog! Good Dime! You love the baby, don't you?"

I am glad I am not a cross dog now. I feel better when I am good. Don't you?

TOT AND THE TURKEY GOBBLER.

TOT was sitting on his grandmother's doorstep looking at his red stockings. His name was not really Tot, but Charles Henry Augustus,—a very long name for a very little boy.



The reason he had such a long name was this. When he was a baby he had two grandfathers and an uncle, who each wanted him named for himself. His father and mother named him for all three ; but everybody called him Tot.

At last he grew tired looking at his stockings, and began to sing. Tot thought he could sing ; no one else thought so. After a little he went to the barn-yard.

TOT AND THE TURKEY GOBBLER.

There were plenty of ducks and geese around, besides chickens and turkeys. Tot always liked to look at them. He liked one old turkey gobbler best of all. But Mr. Gobbler did not like Tot's red stockings. As soon as he saw them he ruffled up his feathers, and with a fierce gobble flew at them. This took Tot so by surprise that he fell over backward, with his head in the chickens' water-pan and his feet in the air.

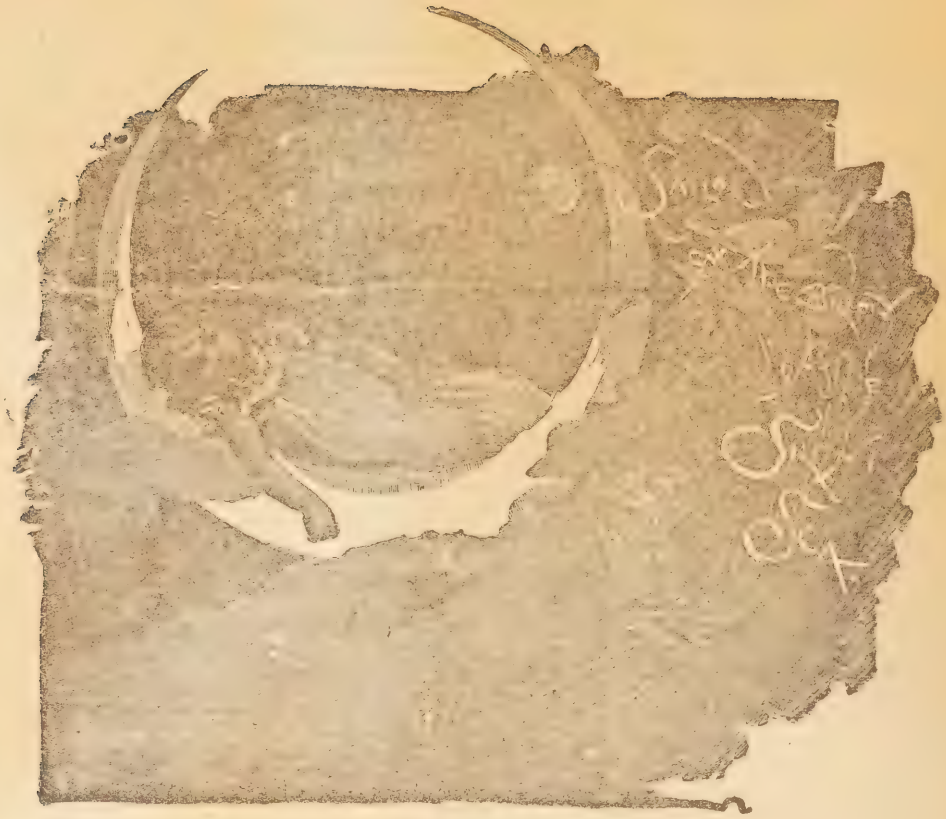
How he did scream! His grandmother heard him in the kitchen. His aunts heard him in the parlor. His mother heard him in her room. She ran down into the yard.

There she found his grandmother and aunts. Nobody knew what had happened, or where Tot was. His mother ran to the barn-yard; the others ran after her.

There they found poor Tot on his back, screaming with all his might. All the ducks, geese, and chickens were making a great noise.

The old gobbler was just ready for another attack. Aunt Mary seized an old broom and drove away the turkey; Aunt Kate stopped her ears with her fingers, to keep out the noise; Grandma did nothing; but Tot's mother picked him up and carried him into the house. After he had been washed and comforted, his mother asked him why he had gone alone to the barn-yard. Tot said nothing, because he had no reason to give.





BABY'S GONE TO LAPLAND.

BABY's gone to Lapland, on her mother's knee;
Baby's gone to Napland, sound as she can be;
Bring the baby's nighty, little sister, run;
She is Queen and mighty, —rules us every-one.

Breath is like the posies; teeth are like the pearls;
Lips are pretty roses; golden are her curls;
Roguish baby's eyes are; ears are dainty shells;
How she's growing wiser everybody tells.

BABY'S GONE TO LAPLAND.

Dimples on her shoulders ; say just what you may,
Baby's getting older every blessed day.

Fingers all so slender ; toes so white and pink ;
Babies are so tender — wonder what they think ?

Baby's gone to Lapland, on her mother's knee,
Baby's gone to Napland, sound as she can be ;
Bring the baby's nighty, little sister, run ;
She is Queen and mighty, — rules us every-one.

Lay her on the pillow, soft as soft can be —
Sailor on the billow of the Silent Sea.

B. W. LOWRIE

